

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 IO-10 OMB-01 NIC-01 AID-05 IGA-01

SAM-01 EA-06 /098 W

----- 053741

R 090800Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5297

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T SANAA 827 FINAL SECTION OF 2

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PING, PFOR, MASS, SA, YE

SUBJ: PRES. HAMDI ON INTERNAL YEMENI SCENE AND RED SEA DEVELOPMENTS

GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY OF THAT COUNTRY. I POINTED
OUT, HOWEVER, THAT IN COUNTRIES LIKE GREECE AND TURKEY,
AS WELL AS IN SOUTH KOREA WHICH WE HAD ALSO MASSIVELY
HELPED, THE GOVERNMENTS THERE HAD SUCCEEDED AGAINST
LEFTIST THREATS BECAUSE THERE HAD BEEN GENERAL
COHESION AMONG THE LEADERSHIP AND AN IDENTIFICATION OF
THAT LEADERSHIP WITH THE PEOPLE AND THEIR ASPIRATIONS.

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8. HAMDI AGREED AND SAID THAT HE BELIEVES THAT IT IS IMPORTANT FOR ALL "SINCERE YEMENIS TO WORK TOGETHER AT THIS TIME. HE ADDED THAT IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT FOR THE YEMENI TRADITIONALISTS TO COOPERATE WITH THE "YOUTH OF YEMEN" BECAUSE IN THE LONG RUN IT WILL BE THE FORMER WHO WILL LOSE MORE THAN THE MODERNIZING YOUTH, SHOULD THE LEFT TAKE OVER. I AGREED WITH HIM AND INDICATED THAT I HAD MADE THE SAME OBSERVATION TO SOME OF MY YEMENI FRIENDS OF CONSERVATIVE PERSUASION INCLUDING SHAIKH ABDALLAH AL-AHMAR(PRES. OF THE CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY WHOM I HAD SEEN A WEEK OR SO AGO. HAMDI SMILED AND THANKED ME FOR THE SUPPORT WHICH THE USG HAS CONSISTENTLY GIVEN TO THE MODERATE AND MODERNIZING ELEMENTS OF THE COUNTRY. I TOLD HIM THAT AS A REPUBLIC WHICH HAD GONE THROUGH EQUALLY DIFFICULT DAYS IN ITS EARLY HISTORY, THE US CAN SYMPATHIZE WITH THE PROBLEMS WHICH YEMEN IS FACING WHILE IT TRIES TO ESTABLISH A STABLE FORM OF GOVERNMENT THOROUGHLY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE VARIOUS ELEMENTS WHICH MAKE UP YEMENI SOCIETY. I TOLD HIM THAT WE WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT YEMEN'S GOVERNMENT UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP AND PROMISED HIM THAT I WOULD CONVEY HIS VIEWS TO MY GOVERNMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

9. HAMDI POINTED OUT THAT THE YEMENI GOVERNMENT IS THOROUGHLY APPRECIATIVE OF ALL US ASSISTANCE WHICH HAS BEEN FORTHCOMING OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES WHICH THE USG FACES. HAMDI EXPRESSED THE OPINION, HOWEVER, THAT THE USG MIGHT CONSIDER FURTHER ASSISTANCE TO THE YEMEN PARTICULARLY TO THOSE PROJECTS WHICH WOULD HAVE AN IMMEDIATE IMPACT ON THE YEMENI PEOPLE WHOM HE CHARACTERIZED AS EASILY INFLUENCED BECAUSE OF THEIR LONG ISOLATION FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD. HE NOTED FOR EXAMPLE THAT EVERYONE IN YEMEN KNOWS OF THE CHINESE ROADS AND HOSPITALS AS WELL AS SIMILAR SOVIET PROJECTS. FEW YEMENIS ARE AWARE OF ANY MAJOR AMERICAN PROJECTS. I POINTED OUT TO HIM THAT A FEW DAYS AGO AMERICAN EXPERTS HAD ARRIVED TO WORK OUT THE DETAILS FOR A TEN-MILLION DOLLAR LOAN TO EXPAND THE TAIZ WATER SYSTEM.

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I ALSO TOLD HIM WE ARE COGUIDERING THE POSSIBILITY FOR NEXT FISCAL YEAR OF A FIVE-MILLION DOLLAR PROJECT TO INSTALL POTABLE WATER SYSTEMS IN FIVE SMALL CITIES IN YEMEN. HAMDI EXPRESSED HIS AWARENESS OF THESE PROJECTS AND ACKNOWLEDGED THEIR IMPORTANCE BUT REITERATED HIS HOPE THAT THE USG COULD GIVE SOME THOUGHT TO AT LEAST ONE PROJECT WHICH MIGHAT HAVE A MORE "TANGIBLE" IMPACT.

10. HAMDI ALSO EXPRESSED A CONCERN ABOUT THE STATE OF READINESS OF THE YEMENI ARMY WHICH HE SAID "LACKS EVERYTHING". HE NOTED IN THIS REGARD THAT OVER THE LAST MONTH OR SO THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASE IN TERRORISM IN THE SOUTHERN PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. HE ADMITTED THAT SOME OF THESE ACTS MAY BE DUE TO LOCAL CONDITIONS BUT INDICATED THAT EXTREMISTS IN SOUTH YEMEN WERE BEHIND SOME OF THESE INCIDENTS AS WELL. HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE AGAIN THAT THE USG COULD PERSUADE THE SAUDIS TO MOVE FASTER ON THE MODERNIZATION PROGRAM ON WHICH THE SAUDIS AND THE US EXPERTS HAVE ALREADY AGREED. HE ADDED THAT THE YEMENI ARMY WISHES TO REDUCE ITS DEPENDENCE ON THE SOVIETS BUT IT CANNOT ACCOMPLISH SUCH A MOVE UNLESS IT IS ASSURED OF A RELIABLE SUPPLY ALTERNATIVE.

11. FINALLY, HAMDI COMMENTED THAT MODERATES IN YEMEN ARE PRESENTLY CLOSELY FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS IN INDO-CHINA AND MANY OF THEM ARE NOW WONDERING IS USG WILL DEMONSTRATE AN EQUAL LACK OF CONCERN ABOUT ITS FRIENDS AND INTERESTS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD. HE CONCLUDED THAT IF USG REALLY CARES ABOUT ITS INTERESTS IN THE RED SEA AREA IT WILL ACT PROMPTLY AND IMPRESSIVELY. OTHERWISE, EXTREMISTS IN THIS AREA WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE VACUUM TO STEP IN AS THEY HAVE ALREADY DONE IN THE FAR EAST. I ASSURED HIM THAT USG VALUES ITS INTERESTS IN THE RED SEA AND PARTICULARLY ITS FRIENDSHIP WITH YEMEN'S MODERATE LEADERSHIP. I CITED PRESIDENT FORD'S RECENT LAS VEGAS SPEECH AS AN EXAMPLE OF AMERICA'S CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT ITS FRIENDS AND ALLIES AROUND THE WORLD. HAMDI REPLIED THAT HE APPRECIATED THESE ASSURANCES BUT THAT WORDS MUST ALSO BE ACCOMPANIED BY DEEDS.

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12. COMMENT: HAMDI WAS RELAXED, ARTICULATE, EXTREMELY FRIENDLY AND CONVEYED THE IMPRESSION OF A MAN SURE OF HIMSELF AND OF HIS MISSION. HE APPEARED SINCERELY WORRIED HOWEVER, ABOUT THE RISE OF LEFTIST INFLUENCE IN THE RED SEA AREA AND THE THREAT WHICH THIS POSES TO YEMEN. IT WAS ALSO OBVIOUS THAT HE WAS CONVEYING TO ME HIS DEEP CONCERN AND THAT OF HIS COLLEAGUES ABOUT SHORT-SIGHTED SAUDI SUPPORT FOR YEMEN'S TRADITIONAL SHAIKHS WHO, WHILE A POWER IN THE COUNTRY, ARE NONETHELESS OFTEN A ROAD-BLOCK TO YEMEN'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT. (EMBASSY PREPARING SEPTTEL DESCRIBING RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS REGARD.) HAMDI EXPRESSED HIS HOPE SEVERAL TIMES THAT HE AND I WOULD SEE ONE ANOTHER REGULARLY, STRESSING THAT "MY OFFICE, MY HOUSE AND

MY HEART ARE OPEN TO YOU". AS I MENTIONED ABOVE, THIS IS MY FIRST TETE-A-TETE WITH HAMDY AND I AM IMPRESSED WITH HIS REASONABLE, MODERATE AND WELL-THOUGHT-OUT GRASP OF YEMEN'S INTERNAL SITUATION AS WELL AS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEVELOPMENTS IN YEMEN AND IN THE SURROUNDING AREA. IN THIS REGARD, I HAVE BEEN EQUALLY IMPRESSED BY MOST OF THE OTHER TOP MEMBERS OF THIS GOVERNMENT WHOM I HAVE THUS FAR MET AND BELIEVE THAT THIS IS A GROUP OF MEN WHO REPRESENT AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY FOR BOTH YEMEN AND THE UNITED STATES AND WHO, THEREFORE, SHOULD BE FULLY SUPPORTED.

13. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT AMBASSADOR AKINS BE AUTHORIZED TO DISCUSS THE YEMENI SITUATION WITH CROWN PRINCE FAHD EMPHASIZING (A) THE USG BELIEF THAT THE PRESENT YEMENI GOVERNMENT REPRESENTS THE BEST CHANCE FOR BOTH SAUDI ARABIA AND THE US TO ESTABLISH A MODERATE PROGRESSIVE AND STABLE REGIME IN YEMEN: (B) SAUDI ARABIA CHANNEL ITS SUPPORT FOR YEMEN THROUGH THE YEMENI GOVERNMENT AND NOT THROUGH INDIVIDUALS WHO FREQUENTLY USE SAG SUPPORT FOR PERSONAL BENEFIT; AND (C) SAUDI ARABIA BEGIN TO MOVE QUICKLY TO IMPLEMENT THE MODERNIZATION OF YEMEN'S ARMY IN FACT OF GROWING

LEFTIST INFLUENCE IN THE SOUTHERN RED SEA REGION.

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14. MISSION WILL STUDY POSSIBILITY OF ADDITIONAL "IMPACT PACKAGE" AND WILL DISCUSS LATTER DURING AA/NESA NOOTER APRIL 16-21 VISIT TO YEMEN.
SCOTES

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